

MOUTHLESS MAX and his ALL-ROBOT CHORUS LINE!

**FROM OUT OF THE ASHES,
A VOICE**

#5



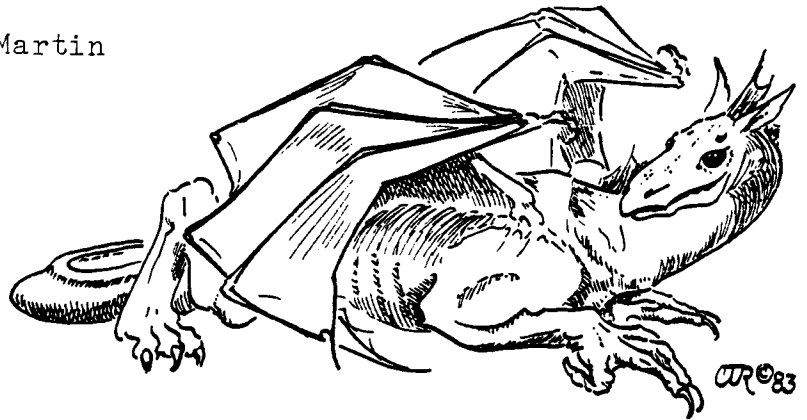
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- _____ TRADE
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- _____ YOU ARE MENTIONED.
- _____ THIS IS YOUR LAST ISSUE UNLESS WE RECEIVE SOME MONEY.
- _____ CAN'T THINK OF A REASON.
- _____ WE MADE YOU AN OFFER YOU COULDN'T REFUSE.

This Issue of FOOTA, AV IS DEDICATED TO:

Dr. Bill Martin



FROM OUT OF THE ASHES, A VOICE # 5 (May, 1983) is the official publication of the Atlanta Science Fiction Club, Inc., edited by Angela Howell, 959-A Waverly Court, Norcross, Georgia 30071, Laura Bulman, 2006 Treehouse Parkway, Norcross, Georgia 30093 and Laura Taylor, 45 Herbert Hayes Drive, Lawrenceville, Georgia 30245. All contents copyright (C) 1983 AGL Graphics; all rights returned to contributors. Subscriptions are 12/\$6.00 or available for the usual. Locs, art and reviews are appreciated! Drop us a contribution.

MINUTES

The April ASFIC meeting was called to order by Prez Howell at 8:15 P.M. The Treasurer's report and minutes from the March meeting were read and approved.

Angela announced next item was voting by the membership on the motion brought up at the March meeting (Honorary memberships for ASFIC). Voting was held by written ballot and the results were as follows: 14 yea, 18 nay, 1 abstention. The motion was defeated. Kathy Kaufmann moved that the ballots be destroyed and Jim Price seconded.

The June meeting will be held at the Northlake Hilton. Suite number will be posted on the announcement board at the registration desk.

Ron Zukowski announced he would be taking pre-supporting memberships for World Con.

Angela explained the problems the editors are having in getting FOOTA-AV mailed out to the membership.

Brad Linaweaver announced he had sold an article to Silicon Brains. Brad also explained that due to the outcome of the voting, he could not afford the \$10.00 dues and he would have to resign as program director, unless someone would like to pay his dues for him. Steve Hughes donated \$10.00 for Brad.

The By-Laws Committee was introduced.

The Steering Committee was introduced.

Joe Celko announced 10 mailing slots still available for Asfoawn.



WR 6/83

Phyllis Boros announced she could not present a budget to the membership until we have a PERMANENT meeting place. Everyone was urged to find a meeting place, preferably free.

Bill Ritch announced he had attended Harlan Ellison's lecture at DeKalb Community College and found it to be very interesting and enjoyable.

John Campbell announced he was looking for a ride to Kubla, leaving after 6:00 Friday.

Patsy Williams is looking for a ride to Deep South Con.

Kathy Kaufmann moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 P.M. and everyone, except Avery, seconded.

Respectfully submitted:

Laura Bulman, Secretary



MAY 1983

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21 ** ASFIC MEETING 8:00 P.M. Decatur Federal Mt. Vernon Hwy.
22	23	24	25	26	27	28 Ne'at Hold Meeting-Howell House ISTACON Committee Meet- ing Have re- ports ready.
29	30 Memorial Day	31				
			21 ** Officers Mtg. 7:30 p.m.			

DEAD TREE GRAFFITI

BY: RICH HOWELL

DEAD TREE GRAFFITI

COMMENTARY AND REVIEW

AFTER ARMAGEDDON: THE PELBAR CYCLE

When I took the great leap last issue and dove directly into a column for the clubzine, I neglected to tell the editors that DTG had a subtitle to let the readers know the direction I was taking. The subtitle for last month should have read COMMENTARY. A few readers understood immediately; most, however, didn't. I herewith apologize for the oversight.

As you can see from this month's column subtitle, I'm about to do a bit of campaigning for a worthy cause. Most of you have heard or read by now that the final ballot is out for the 1983 Hugos. Attached to that list of categories and finalists, at the bottom, on the flip side, around the corner from the Hugos, is a list of finalists for the John W. Campbell Award. This award is presented annually to an author whose work first appeared during the previous accounting period. Since so many fine new authors tend to appear in bunches, eligibility was stretched over a two year period. Four of the six nominees are in their first year of eligibility: Joseph H. Delaney, Lisa Goldstein, Sandra Miesel, and Warren G. Norwood. All are fine candidates; indeed, Lisa Goldstein recently received an American Book Award for her work. Two of the nominees are in their final year of eligibility: Dave Palmer and Paul O. Williams. I do not know of Dave Palmer or of his work. Neither do I know Paul O. Williams; however, I am an ebullient fan of his work.

Paul O. Williams is a Professor of English at Principia College. He is also the author of four excellent science fiction novels. Each is located in post-post-holocaust North America; each tells a portion of the reunification of the diverse tribes of the era; each tackles a psychological barrier inherent in the characters and/or societies presented; each teaches the lesson of China; each stands well alone.

Many authors have tackled the speculative landscape of a post-holocaust, or post-Armageddon, Earth. Most have been content to write one book and have done with it. A few have attempted to sustain their speculative universes over a span of several works. Fewer still have admirably succeeded. Paul O. Williams is a bright light among the few.



"IMPROVING RECEPTION"

Why does Williams stand above other luminaries? Williams brings to the genre an ability to characterize realistically. He consistently rises above the starched board stereotypes that are so rife in the literature. His characters live and die, love and hate, agonize and empathize with a vibrancy that sweeps the reader into the tales. He makes the reader care what happens to his characters. Without stereotyping, he gives his characters strengths and weaknesses to face the problems and situations that must be resolved. He creates realistic problems, also, consistent with those faced by the everyman in real life. Not at all unlike Poul Anderson, he creates surroundings for his characters that are alive to the senses.

But enough of gushing praise. I told you at the outset that I am an ardent admirer of Williams' novels. No need to try to convince you further of that fact. Let's instead take a short tour through Paul O. Williams' glimpses of the Pelbar Cycle.

THE BREAKING OF NORTHWALL,
Del Rey 29259, 280 pp, \$2.25

This first novel of the cycle is a panoramic tale of the wanderings of Jestak, sent east by the female-dominant Pelbarigan society to be educated. Instead, Jestak never reaches the east coast in his role as student. He undertakes a near six year odyssey of the continent, befriending hostile tribes along the way. In the Pelbar heartland, the society uses walls and fortresses to protect their society from the nomadic Sentani and Shumai tribes, descendants of pre-holocaust America that have reverted to the ways and understandings of the Amerinds. Jestak's eventual rite of passage soon becomes a quest to free his love from the slaveholding Emeri. Exposed to the

ways of the nomadic tribes and the differing strategies of fortress dwellers, Jestak returns to Pelbar with a fresh outlook, eager to prevent the stagnation of his wall-dwelling kindred.

THE ENDS OF THE CIRCLE

Del Rey 29551, 203 pp, \$2.25

The second novel of the cycle is basically a love story. Master craftsman Stel, unpopular because of his ardent admiration for Jestak, finds living behind the walls of Pelbar untenable and flees on his own journey of awakening. His warrior-wife Ahroe pursues in order to bring him back. Apart and together they discover more mysteries of the nomadic tribes, of other protective societies, of areas still uninhabitable due to radiation poisoning, of evidence that some bastions of the pre-holocaust civilization still exist.

THE DOME IN THE FOREST

Del Rey 30087, 214 pp, \$2.25

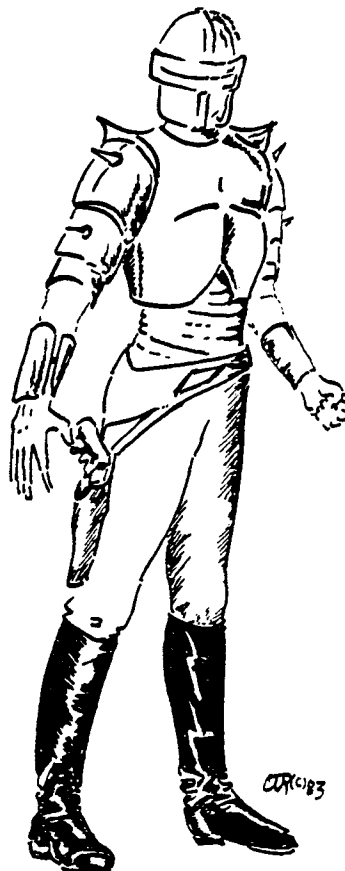
The primitive Shumai worship a dome that appears to have risen at one leading edge of an uninhabitable area. In reality, the dome is a fallout shelter housing survivors of the pre-holocaust era. Stel and Ahroe and the befriended Tor, a Shumai axeman, set about penetrating the dome's defenses to get at the ancient artifacts they believe it contains. Instead, they come away with Celeste, a teenaged inhabitant of the long-term shelter. Resultant events change the face of the post-holocaust societies in unexpected ways.

THE FALL OF THE SHELL

Del Rey 30595, 214 pp, \$2.50

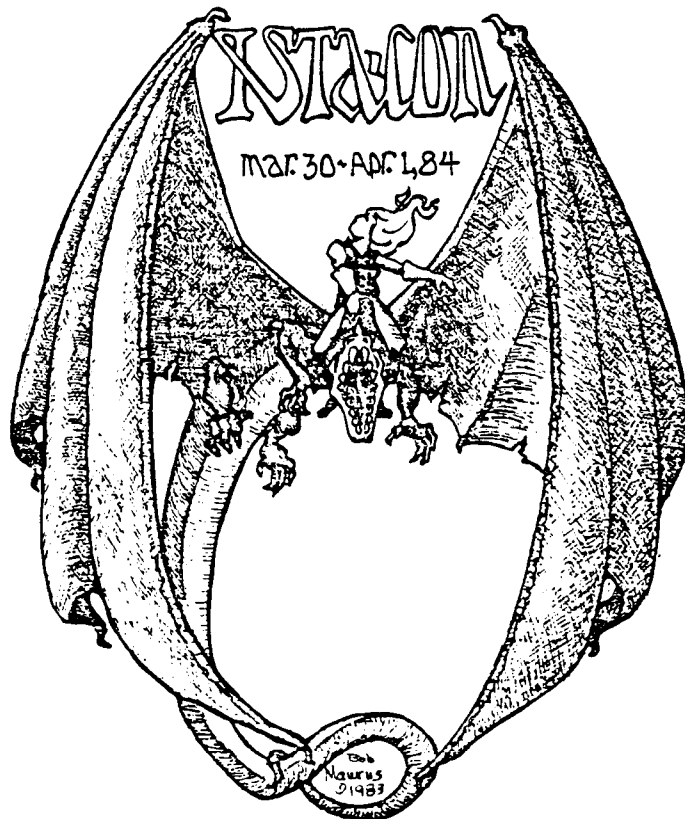
Threerivers is the most conservative of the Pelbar strongholds. It is also a marvel of construction, based upon enlightened engineering designs culled from nature. Gamwyn and Brudoer are twin boys whose mischief and its results throw an entire city into political and social turmoil.

My apologies if these synopses appear unseemly shallow. I truly do not wish to spoil the enjoyment of the delights each novel conceals. If you have not visited the four branches of the Paul O. Williams goldmine, you must indeed prepare right away to enter and come away with your own favorite nuggets. There exists something for everyone in these books. And while you're at it, how's about a vote for Paul O. Williams as the 1983 Campbell Award winner for Best New Writer in the field of Science Fiction and Fantasy?!



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We will be holding a raffle at Istacon I and what will be raffled? Well one gold (14K) Pendant and one silver one.

Bob has also announced that he will probably be making around 75 silver pendants to sell.

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"Two Kongs Don't Make A Right"

by Brad Linaweaver

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"And the Prophet said: And lo! the Beast looked upon the face of Beauty. And it stayed its hand from killing. And from that day it was as one dead."

With this old Arabian proverb--cooked up by Hollywood producer Merian C. Cooper--began a motion picture that in a few short years would be hailed as American folklore. RKO studios released King Kong in 1933 and it did record business, even though it was during the depression (Roosevelt had ordered the banks closed shortly before Kong was screened). Perhaps the grimness of the times contributed to the popularity of a film that offered pure escapism. The critics were as enthusiastic as the public in recognizing the broad appeal of the story. Here was the definitive statement on the beauty and the beast theme. Deliberately exaggerated right out of this world, it told of a giant gorilla and his hopeless love for a woman off the streets of New York City. The climax atop the Empire State Building, a beleaguered Kong holding the girl in his gargantuan hand as airplanes circle for the kill, is quite possibly the most famous scene in the history of cinema. Certainly the most traumatic. It forever identified the actress who played Kong's bride with the role--Fay Wray, the beauty who screamed her way to stardom. Those screams retain an authentic quality of fear to this day.

Alas, four decades later a man named Dino De Laurentiis decides to remake King Kong. He promises bigger and better thrills--"I give them quality"--and the extra touch of updating the story from the Depression landscape of the 1930's to the present day.

This time Kong meets his end on one of the towers of the World Trade Center (although the posters falsely show the new Kong standing astride the twin towers, an impossibility given their distance apart). He does battle with helicopters instead of sputtering biplanes (although the first posters in the new Kong campaign show him swatting at jets which could take his arm off). This new Kong is to be the most spectacular movie event ever...or so promises its producer. It would have been better had Mr. De Laurentiis looked upon the classic version and stayed his hand from doing a remake.

Whenever a famous film is remade, comparisons are inevitable. It is usually the case that reviewers find the new version inferior. There is a moral here that is painfully obvious but never has there been more cause for lambasting a remake. This notion of improving on other people's successes is a bad one. It betrays a dearth of imagination! The artistic failure of the new King Kong is appropriate because it shows what is wrong with the movie industry today and re-

DER QUALITY

BY: BRAD LINAWEAVER

minds us that you can't plow the same field forever. (Already the storm warnings are up: some "genius" is suggesting a remake of Gone With the Wind.)

Before we compare the two versions of King Kong, we should begin with history. In 1912, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's novel The Lost World was published. It was about a scientific expedition that discovers dinosaurs alive in the modern world. In later years, The Lost World would inspire a virtual flood of monster films to cash in on the educational value of dramatized courses in paleontology. In these stories of great saurians or imaginary creatures even nastier, it is lost islands or lost continents that most often provide the locale--unlike Doyle's South American plateau. (It was a lost island that provided the setting for Kong and sundry dinosaurs.) Inevitably these expeditions set out by sea, arriving in steaming jungles where they discover the relics of an ancient civilization or find grotesque footprints leading into the interior. In the tradition of ogre infested myths, it isn't long before the adventurers make the acquaintance of giants of one sort or another, whereupon the number of explorers decrease until only a few hardy souls are left.

Meeting prehistoric animals in the flesh has become a staple in the public's imagination. But in 1925, when the first film version of The Lost World was released, it was a novelty. There on the screen roamed living, breathing dinosaurs, dwarfing the human actors. How could such a thing be? Doyle himself personally played the film before a meeting of stage magicians and stunned the assembly with the magic on the screen.

Willis O'Brien was the man who made the dinosaurs move by using the process of stop motion animation (to be explained shortly). In several years he would be responsible for the special effects of King Kong and would be identified with that film for the rest of his career.

Next we come to Merian C. Cooper who conceived Kong and along with his old friend Ernest Schoedsack produced it. Together they had produced Grass(1925) set in Persia, and Chang(1927) set in Siam, both of them widely acclaimed documentaries of wild animals in their native habitats. Renowned for their daring--Schoedsack once enticed a tiger to jump up a tree he was in so he could get a good camera shot--and always on the outlook for good movie material, it wasn't surprising that these two men when confined to the sound stages would produce a fantasy of unparalleled audacity. It was in their blood.

Cooper was fascinated with the idea of lost worlds but was dissatisfied with the dramatic value of dinosaurs as the primary menace. He saw the great reptiles in a role secondary to something more powerful and terrifying. Only something with human qualities would be acceptable for his "star," hence the idea for an utterly fanciful creation like Kong--a giant ape whose face would mirror the manlike qualities of jealousy, rage and joy. The skill of Willis O'Brien could make dinosaurs come to life on screen; so it would be with Kong. He put his own expressions into the face of Kong, and in this most personal way contributed to the legend.

Cooper had seen from the outset that stop motion animation would be preferable to any alternative (dismissing the idea of using a live gorilla, mechanical gorilla or man in ape suit). The effect is done by building a miniature model with a jointed armature so that it can be moved into any position. The model--or puppet, if you like--is placed in a scaled down set, then its body is moved infinitesimally, the right number of film frames are exposed, and the model is moved again. The completed strip of film gives the illusion of movement. It is a painstaking approach that consumes weeks before a scene is finished. Yet it is the most rewarding way of depicting the fantastic and impossible--with this process, you construct another world from scratch. In the case of Kong, there were several models, eighteen inches high, as well as a full scale bust for closeups and a giant arm and hand. The dinosaurs were latex-skinned models. Kong's skin was covered with rabbit fur.

Had there been nothing else going for this film, it would have become famous for its visuals. But technical virtuosity alone cannot make a legend. It is the outrageous story itself that engages audience interest and it is the sense of urgency underlying the drama that gives it a breathtaking quality. There is enthusiasm in the film; it is as if the entire cast knew they were participating in the finest Halloween prank of their lives. No amount of intervening years can take that earnest excitement out of the film.

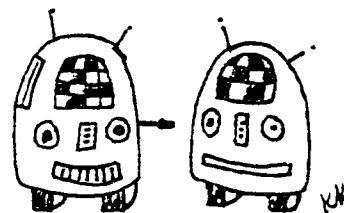
Fay Wray still tells the story about how Merian C. Cooper first introduced the subject of Kong, asking her if she'd like to play against the tallest, darkest leading men in Hollywood. Visions of Clark Gable were quickly dispelled by a headlong plummet into the world of Skull Island, where her suitor carried her around in the palm of his hand, defended her against various dinosaur transgressions, dumped Fay's pursuing companions into a chasm and finally took the long fall himself in New York City. Carl Denham, Kong's captor, echoed Cooper's sentiments when he said the famous closing line: "It was beauty killed the beast."

Today we are hearing Jessica Lange tell the story of how she was chosen for the remake of Kong. A fashion model from Manhattan, she is enjoying her overnight fame. Whereas Fay Wray was already working in films when she made Kong, the new actress owes her career to the part. (It is interesting to note that the character played by Fay Wray, Ann Darrow, was an out of work actress who went on a crazy voyage to a mysterious island in the hopes she would wind up a movie star; the new girl plays a young aspiring starlet named Dwan who was on board a movie producer's yacht in the hopes he would make her a star, when they shipwreck and she is the sole survivor, picked up by another ship en route to a mysterious island.) But whether or not Lange will ever be as identified with the part as Fay Wray, only time will tell. As the two Kongs are sure to be compared, so will the two "brides."

There have been mountains of verbiage written about the sociological significance of the first Kong. Sexual, racial and economic theories abound in these tracts. Kong has been seen as a symbol of almost everything that's currently popular--the everyman, lashing out in frustration against society. These theories aside, Kong was just a monster ape who found it difficult to take human beings seriously.

This new Kong is different from his predecessor, however, because his makers know all about the essays that have been written on King Kong during the last forty years. Self consciously, they have set out to make their Kong relevant to the times. Oh boy. They have shoved a big wad of relevance down our throats. They have made their Kong so relevant that he ends up more like a cross between Billy Jack and Gentle Ben than anything resembling King Kong.

Soal shriek
pop-click
+++!



(let's get digital)

The most unforgivable sin is that after forty years of technological progress, after atomic energy and putting man on the moon, you would expect really spectacular special effects in the 1976 King Kong, wouldn't you? Here too, the new film is inferior to the first. They didn't use stop motion animation. Instead, 1.7 million dollars was spent on a full scale, forty foot robot of Kong. This fact was highlighted in all the advertising. The robot even got its own credit at the end of the film. Yet this machine is seen on screen for a total of five shots, lasting a little over one minute. It is the poorest thing in the film, a forty foot fake, a statue that can barely move. The rest of the time we are treated to a man in a monkey suit. This is progress?

To be fair, it must be admitted the new King Kong boasts one genuine technical achievement. The head on top of the ape costume is realistic, not an immobile mask. This is achieved by hydraulic muscles in the face, operated off-screen by remote control. The result is an utterly convincing gorilla face--it snarls, it moves its lips, it shows its gums, it flexes its mouth in every way. The mouth looks so real with its set of yellow teeth that when he holds Jessica near him, you expect her to pass out from his breath. (But hydraulic muscles hardly compare to what they achieved in the first--the development of the miniature projection process whereby human characters can be projected into a miniature set.)

Convincing you that there is an animal on the screen is not enough. Despite what the makers of this new film seem to believe, King Kong is not really a story about a giant gorilla. It's a story about a monster.

When you get right down to it, there is nothing intrinsically awe inspiring about a gorilla. His basically passive nature is understandable when you take into account his appearance--bulky, slow moving, teeth suited more for the chewing of fruit than the rending of enemy flesh (although the teeth do serve a more aggressive purpose when needed). A gorilla will go to great lengths to avoid trouble and only fight when necessary.

A monster, on the other hand, looks imposing from the start. When you see him, you can only think one thing: trouble! Size alone is not enough to inspire the proper reaction. You also need a threatening demeanor. Merian Cooper understood this when he made his Kong. Dino De Laurentiis never grasped it.

According to Orville Goldner and George E. Turner in their excellent book, The Making of King Kong (Ballantine Books 25134), there was a conflict between O'Brien and Cooper over how Kong should look in the 1933 version.

Marcel Delgado, the man who was to build the ape, found himself caught in the middle. O'Brien wanted the ape to be almost human, but Cooper thought that would make it look too humorous. Cooper said, "I want Kong to be the fiercest, most brutal, monstrous damned thing that has ever been seen." He maintained that the more fearsome the beast, the more the audience would sympathize with him at the end. He was right. The end result was not comical, nor did it look like any gorilla who ever lived. It was something caught between the realistic and the incredible, a mythological god able to convey human qualities one moment and fiendish rage the next. He was truly one of a kind, a beetle-browed demon.

The new Kong is just a gorilla. That is the film's essential flaw. Even the settings reflect a different view. The first version gave us a fantasy landscape of matte paintings on glass--a dream composed of light and shadow. The new one's imaginary landscapes are drabber than the on-location stuff.

Let us consider a few more comparisons and it should become evident that the new film has the wrong philosophy for its subject matter. We begin with the human characters. In both stories we have a dominant figure who wants to make money--the capitalist. In 1933 he was a hero; in 1976 he is a pig. The entrepreneur character in the first Kong was Carl Denham (played by Robert Armstrong). He wanted to make the greatest film of all time but wound up with the greatest live attraction instead. Early in the film, when the captain of Denham's chartered vessel was asked if the movie maker was crazy, he answered, "No, just enthusiastic." This captures the American spirit of Cooper and Schoedsack from whom Denham's character was drawn. Like Kong, Denham goes after what he wants with a vengeance. Proof of his good character was that after he single-handedly brought down Kong, he shouted to his men: "We're millionaires, boys. I'll share it with all of you!"

Kong's "owner" in 1976 (played by Charles Grodin) is a greedy caricature of a wheeler-dealer who would sell his grandmother for a gallon of oil. He is also portrayed as stupid. He consistently makes the wrong decisions. He wants an oil strike but finds Kong instead. He mistreats Kong. Naturally Kong knows this sanctimonious stuffshirt is exploiting him and when the occasion presents itself the ape rises up with all the fury of the third world nation and grinds our luckless capitalist into the dirt. A few children in the audience cheer at this.

The movie leading men are different, too. The man who rescued Kong's bride in the first film (Bruce Cabot) was not very bright or refined but he did his job well. The new guy (Jeff Bridges) is afraid that after all the excitement his girl has had, he won't be able to measure

up. Well, he should know. The Bridges character fits the new film perfectly. We don't believe in heroes anymore. They are bad for the ecology it seems.

Kong's brides have one thing in common-- they are both young women. There--as the cliché goes--the similarity ends. The character played by Fay Wray was taken to the altar struggling, scared to death and visibly displeased by the prospects. She was left tied up and moaning while the natives ran like hell to get behind the door of the great wall between them and Kong. A dramatic scene.

Jessica Lange is drugged by the natives; she is languid as they casually take her up the stairs to the dais. Heaven forbid that the girl of the 1970's should experience anxiety prior to Kong's entrance. To anticipate terror requires imagination.

There was an implication in the first film that Kong's bride was supposed to be a virgin. If Fay Wray had not been the perfect lady aboard ship, there wouldn't have been as much power in her symbolic defilement. (The famous stripping scene in the original was censored upon the picture's re-release by the Hayes office; some other interesting scenes were also cut.) Jessica Lange behaves like she's trying out for a centerfold. Another of the improvements, no doubt.

Fay Wray couldn't get Kong to do anything she wanted. He wouldn't listen. He was the boss in their relationship. That is why she screamed so much.

Jessica Lange only screams upon first sight of Kong. Afterwards she adjusts herself as she would to any blind date. After all, Kong starts cooperating with her once he is convinced she won't run away from him. She gets in line rather quickly, this new bride. There is one good moment when Dwan wonders if Kong plans to eat her and she strikes him on the upper lip and calls him a "goddamn chauvinist pig ape!" Honest. She adds as an afterthought, "I hope you choke on me"--which is a good line by the way. Before long they make up, however, and she tells him about her favorite subject, astrology (naturally).



What it comes down to is a matter of attitude. The difference between the characters of the two girls is the same as the difference between the two versions of King Kong--radically opposed philosophies. Dwan is "modern" and chic; she is nihilistic and not terribly concerned with whether she lives or dies, unlike Ann Darrow who was a fighter and wanted to live.

When the original Kong prevented dinosaurs from making a meal of Ann, the lady appreciated the valorous defense of her life but nonetheless availed herself of the opportunity to escape. No rational person would count on a monster staying in a good mood! From Kong's standpoint, he had earned the right to keep his new toy, but that was hardly Fay Wray's concern.

Jessica Lange becomes so used to the company of a giant gorilla that she begs him at the end of the film to hold on to her. She knows that unless she is in Kong's hand, the helicopters will shoot him down. Isn't that noble of her? Dwan seems to lack the fear of heights which was part of Ann Darrow's problem as she hung over the abyss. Dwan has no fear of anything. Astrology does that for you.

One last point should be made about the different ways of handling the human characters in King Kong. It is a matter of pacing within the films. Both versions depend on a slow build-up before Kong's entrance, thus contributing to the suspense. But it was only the first one that became fast paced the moment Kong entered the scene. Suddenly there was so much action that the only way to contain it was by moving as swiftly as possible from one thrill to the next. There was no time for development of the human characters once the MONSTER came on the screen. The personalities of the adventurers had to be well delineated before they dropped over the edge into fantasy. This technique worked brilliantly by first establishing the story groundwork, then letting out all the stops, a one-two punch.

New Kong is slow paced because it has to be. There isn't enough excitement in the film for it to be otherwise. Despite the borrowing of some famous cliff hangers from the original (Kong shaking men off a log over a ravine and his later battle with a snake creature) the new one swells on sub-plots after Kong is introduced. We much around in the dull lives of these range-of-the-moment hedonists all the way through the picture's interminably long running length.

And so we come to the inevitable comparison between the two Kongs themselves and the very different lost worlds over which they reign. The most crucial distinction is in the kind of lives they lead. Old Kong was kept busy on his island by the competition. Dinosaurs were everywhere and in the course of one day he had to fight a Tyrannosaurus Rex (the most

impressive part of the original was this dynamic sequence), an Elasmosaurus (the snake-like creature in the cave) and a Pterodactyl, the winged reptile. Fighting the dinosaurs was an important part of his psychology. Later in the movie, when he was on display in New York, and turned opening night into closing night by escaping, he interpreted man's technology in the only way he could--he saw everything as a bunch of mechanical dinosaurs (ape qua man). He had excellent motivation for all his actions. When he wrecked the elevated train, he was "killing" it. When he faced the old biplanes, he was bracing himself for an attack by a swarm of pterodactyls. The tragedy was that he didn't understand the different context. The artistic reward was a film with symmetry-- unlike the new one.

New Kong lives on an island without dinosaurs. No competition. There is one giant snake, sort of an overgrown boa constrictor with a mechanical head. It looks like it would make a fine muppet. The scene where the snake coils itself around the man in the ape suit is unconvincing. The Elasmosaurus in the original almost choked Kong to death before he bashed its brains out. The new Kong kills the snake by ripping its jaws apart (which is stolen from the old Kong's killing of the Tyrannosaurus when he forced its jaws open until they cracked).

We never feel the new Kong is in any danger. He is a giant hippie probably drawing welfare checks. No wonder he is impotent when he bursts through the giant gate--he even receives assistance from the people on the other side (!)-- and stumbles into a pit filled with chloroform gas. Organization man is waiting for him. Poor animal. He didn't know the right way to go about it. Anyone who hasn't seen the original can nonetheless imagine what the grand old Kong was like when he came through the gates on his island.

There is a disparity in the new Kong's character, however. Having established the degree of his apathy (passivity, if you prefer) it seems incongruous to observe his odd behavior with the elevated train in New York. (Both films have this scene.) New Kong rips the roof of the train away as though he were opening a sardine can, then reaches inside and grabs someone he thinks is Dwan. It isn't she. Realizing his mistake, he throws the woman to her death. This "wrong woman" scene is a reworking of a much better one in the original when Kong reached into an apartment and pulled someone out. He quickly saw his mistake and casually let go of her. She fell twenty stories to her death. (The censors got hold of this part.)* The horror was in his total indifference to her fate. The new Kong is deliberate when he tosses her away. This is unusual for the new one because most of the time he is less violent than his predecessor who liked to chew on people when he was upset.

This comparison would not be complete without a discussion of the climactic death scenes. The first is much better than the second. It's not only a matter of class--any giant ape who knows his etiquette prefers diving off the Empire State to the Trade Towers--but also a matter of taste. The new Kong dies with a cheering section rooting for him in the film. The first Kong died alone. He had no friends among the humans. Give me a bizarre monster over a mistreated animal any day.

Dino De Laurentiis told an interviewer, "No one cry when "Jaws" die, but when the monkey die, people gonna cry." For once Dino is right. I cried when I saw his King Kong.

Upon close observation there are a few positive attributes of the 1976 Kong. The color is adequate. The music is good (by John Barry, composer of the James Bond themes) but doesn't measure up to the dramatic score by Max Steiner for the '33 version. There is one amusing sequence where Kong holds a muddy Jessica Lange under a waterfall to wash her off and afterward puffs up his cheeks and blows her dry. An improbable moment but enjoyable. The last shot is good with a full scale dummy of Kong stretched out on the street by the World Trade Center as nine thousand New Yorkers mill about the corpse.



The end credit flashes on the screen before there is any indication of how they spent all the money they were supposed to have dumped into the production and we are back to contemplating what is wrong with the remake. (My clippings report an amount of money ranging upwards from 17 million to 24 million; I frankly don't have the interest to track down the right amount.) Where did the money go? The lion's share could not have been spent on special effects unless there was terrible waste. For the same amount of dollars they could have made several effective stop motion animation films. There are more than enough practitioners of the art who would have jumped at the chance.

In fact, a legal decision gave Paramount the remake rights, preventing Universal Pictures from going ahead at the time with plans to remake King Kong as a technicolor period piece, complete with miniature model effects, dinosaurs and a cameo role by Fay Wray! Mr. De Laurentiis insisted on a modern Kong from the start. He got what he wanted.

The most damning thing is that the new King Kong tells us we have lost the capacity for excitement--we can no longer be thrilled, only kidded around. Dino De Laurentiis is peddling nonsense. It is appropriate, I submit, that one year after the Kong farce, a band of real cinema artists released a movie of pure romantic adventure and grand fantasy without making a single compromise to the cynicism of our times--STAR WARS. We can still be thrilled!

I offer a moral for the men who thought they could remake King Kong with "relevance": it is not possible for a second-hand copy to aesthetically cash in on the integrity of an original work.

* The missing scenes were put back in King Kong prints owned by Janus Films a few years ago.



Boy, Have I got a deal for you!

LOC

Deb Hammer Johnson
Apt Y-20, 3700 Sutherland Ave
Knoxville, TN 37916

April 18, 1983

Pardon the sound of creaking hinges in the back of my mind as I open the door to my letterhacking brain chamber. It's been years since I sat down to do a letter of comment for the Atlanta clubzine. Since graduating, I've been experiencing a slow return of old urges, and producing regular input for FOOTA, AV is one of them. I must say that I miss ATARANTES a great deal, but realize how tired the two editors must have been after some sixty-odd monthly issues; I pooped out on my locking after forty-eight and simply couldn't match their stamina. When I confront my stack of the new clubzine, it's like looking at "the son of ATAR." This new fellow (or, in light of the gender of the editorial staff, the "daughter") is young and unformed, but then, so was ATAR way back in the primordial days when Cliff sent out a half-size, micro-elite zine with a few pages of padding around next month's meeting notice.

Before I launch into some cheery, "nonviolent" commentary on FOOTA, AV #4, I feel I should address repercussions of the one meeting in a year-and-a-half that I was (unfortunately) able to attend. I remain a supporting, associate member of the Worldcon Bid, and I have been through several sets of officers; doubtless there will be more before fandom is gathered in Los Angeles to decide the fate of the '86 Worldcon bid. I hope to be there, and I hope that Atlanta wins. For better or for worse, the bid has done some good and much bad for Atlanta fandom. My attitudes toward those involved still stem from the pre-bid days, when the social scene was less factionalized. My best memories of ASFiC include a talk with Dave Minch at Pizza Inn over the nature of the post-NOREASCON Worldcon talk; bidding ferociously with Michael Smith-Brown over a Bob Maurus ATARANTES cover, and losing (Mike then gave the picture to me anyway); haranguing Brad Linaweaver about the suitability of John Brunner's STAND ON ZANZIBAR for film production; and, last but not least, Ron Zuke's numerous inputs to ASFiC programming, and his continued sincere interest in ASFiC's prosperity. Atlanta fandom ideally finds ASFiC as a good common ground for ALL types of fannish interest. Faces and forums have changed every few years, and the core of oldtimers has remained to hold the group together. I've been on the "out" myself in the name of petty jealousy and politics, and one lesson I've learned is that it takes two to tangle. If one of the members involved in a skirmish feels him or herself to be unjustly on the receiving end, then it's his or her prerogative to wait out a resolution or do something immediately about the situation.

What I'm trying to say in this meandering paragraph is that fannish feuds have their cycles, and that as long as there is incentive on the part of those involved to work for the club. The Worldcon will only last one week, though it represents the culmination of years of work, but ASFiC will go on for years. If one believes that ASFiC has been in operation for approximately seven years, meeting for two hours (officially) each Saturday, this constitutes 168 hours of ASFiC, or seven straight days of

nonstop con activity, where we have all conducted business under a variety of roofs, and sometimes the stars. The whole is bigger and more impressive than the parts. I wish more members will bear this in mind.

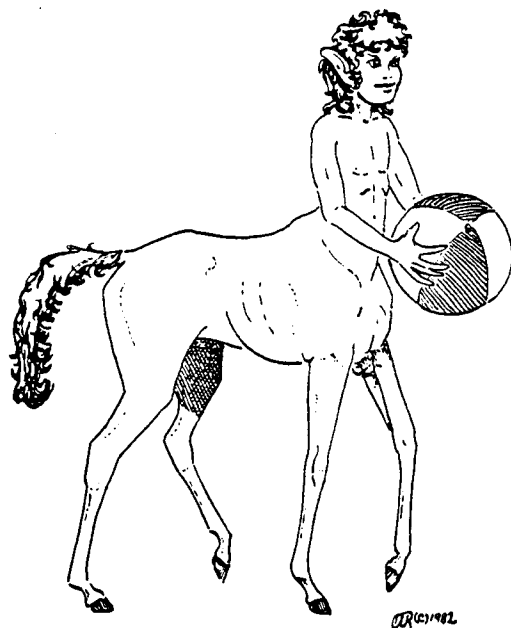
To this extent, I applaud Angela's years at the helm, and the formation of a steering committee to look into club matters. The constitution exists as a structure that supports the club smoothly and it's one reason we've survived as long as we have. I was dismayed to see the election for VeePee handled in such a slipshod manner. For one, the position is not that important that you couldn't allow a meeting to elapse between Sue's announcement and the election. Votes were not done by secret ballot, but by hand, which could lead to endless ill will in the case of a close vote. The entire matter of the "dues exempt" qualifications was something of a headache; I felt especially peeved because I had paid my last \$10 for 1983 membership. The amount does not represent a small fortune, and if the club still continues this policy of years gone, then it can be paid in allotments over a period of several months. Or a member may try the Reinhardt method of auctioning off a few items to make the \$10. There should be some grounds for membership waiver, and the club should stick to them. I realize this is old hat after the recent (April) meeting, but I still wanted to register my feelings.

All this jabberwocky aside, I'd like to address the other stuff in FOOTA,AV that doesn't tie my sentences up in knots. I agree with Angela's assessment of ASFiCON IV, that it was the best yet. She didn't emphasize the dance enough...well, it was my first con dance ever witnessed, and perhaps seems more amazing to me... and the vigor, not to mention the excellent taste that the band displayed. *Ahem* Perhaps this was because of the modesty inherent in Angela's con style, since she is related to the bass guitarist. A cute bunch, all of 'em. The panels were underattended, as usual, but supplied some of the most vigorous and interesting conversation I've ever enjoyed at a convention. I could go on for another few pages, but my hand will be giving out shortly. Suffice to say, it was a good con and worthy of a longer treatment in Myriad and SFPA, which it will get if I have anything else to say. And since when Have I ever been at a loss for words. Hah!

And you can count on me to be at IstaCon.

I'll send some meatier articles next time!

Take care!



A SPECIAL NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT:

In accordance with an Agreement in principle reached May 1, 1983, several replies will not be published in this Clubzine.

We also heard from:

Transmissions Nos. 14, 15 & 16
File 770
ChatSF10 News #20
Arthur D. Hlavaty
Dick & Nicki Lynch
Guy Lillian III
David Schlosser
Bill Zielke
Sue Phillips
Laura Taylor

Harry Warner, Jr.
423 Summit Avenue
Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

The third From Out of the Ashes, A Voice made pleasant reading. But it has the drawback of containing mostly material which lies outside my main range of interests, leaving me with a problem when the time comes to make comments.

I assume that the front cover is a more or less accurate depiction of your current meeting place and one of your members. It's instructive to deduce that banks in Georgia have the same fondness for signs displaced from the buildings that the more modern financial institutions in Hagerstown possess. I have always had the strange idea that I should look for a concealed entrance to a tunnel somewhere around the sign which will lead to the bank, because I grew up in an era when signs were affixed to the buildings they were meant to identify.

I've never had the patience to sit through an entire Fu Manchu movie. But Brad Linaweaver held my interest strongly enough to cause me to sit through the reading of this entire article about a Fu Manchu film. I wonder if anyone who worked on movies like The Mask of Fu Manchu, whether as actor or as director or as technician, ever thought that the films would continue to be analyzed and shown and discussed a half-century later. Back in the 1930's, a movie was manufactured, shown for a few months, and then placed in suspended animation as far as the United States theaters were concerned.

Only a few of the movies in this section of Brad's list of favorites are part of my own experience. Two or three of the others I started to watch on television and gave up after a half-hour or thereabouts. Maybe I'm the only person alive in the 1980's who is willing to admit publicly that he doesn't care for the original King Kong. I didn't see it when it was new; if I had done so, I might like it today for nostalgic reasons. But lots of youthful fans whose parents were in elementary school when King Kong was new are enthusiastic about it, so it obviously is my fault, rather than that of the old movie.

I know nothing and care even less about rock music, so the Spies of Life material is meaningless to me.

Your reproduction is just fine for aging eyes, and the calendar of events makes it clear that fans in the Atlanta area have a strenuous schedule. And that's about all I can do in the way of comments this time, to my regret, since I like to write at least two pages. I'm sorry.

Brad W. Foster
4109 Pleasant Run
Irving, Texas 75062

Hot damn! When I got FOOTA,AV #3 it only had one of those little lines checked off in the back. Now I get #4 with a total of 7 of the suckers marked. I must be doing something right afterall.

To keep up that level couple of new things this time out. Two brand new little fillos, done just after getting this one, since you used the last two sent. As well there should be a thing in here titled "Mouthless Max...". That was done several years ago for an apa I was in, and then reworked a bit later as a cover for a fanzine that never saw the light of day. I've always been a bit partial to Max and wanted to give him more exposure than that apa, so I humbly submit him to you as a cover for FOOTA,AV. I folded him to get into the envelope, but hopefully the creases will cause no real problems should you care to use him. Please, give Max a home!

Speaking of covers, I'm a bit curious as to why you printed the cover of #4 sideways. The artwork certainly would have fit fine on a vertical format, so there must have been some reason why you decided to run it on the horizontal. What then is the great secret?

Boy, certainly sounds like you people hold, well, interesting meetings! Never saw so much space given over to comments on a meeting in a club-zine before! Running back over the various items, just a few questings from an outsider: Just how many people do you have in this club? Sounds like a pretty large organization if you need two sgt-at-arms to maintain crowd control! All that stuff about motions and seconds and proposals and improper by-law-amendment-whatevers just served to remind me of why I never could get too involved with any clubs myself - hate rules.

Minor nit-picking point here, you need to edit some of the text a bit more closely for misspellings and just plain lousy grammar at times. I'm no English major so I won't point fingers, but at times some of this stuff got kind of awkward reading. Northing major, but enough minor things to begin to get noticable.

So, tell me, what is the difference between: Jack, 'Jack' and "Jack"?

Yeah, I like "Wizards and Warriors" too for that mixture of humor in the action, like they all know it's only for fun. As far as Scotty's complaints about the fantasy elements being unimaginative, he hit it on the head when he said he was "looking at the show from the vantage point of an adult heavily steeped in fantasy". Have to remember this is TV for the great unwashed out there, and as such the majority of them have never been exposed to fantasy beyond other tv/movies, so what is cliche to him is startling new stuff to them. If the show was going straight such things would bother me too, but I watch it as a comedy and enjoy it very much on that level.

LOCS

That's it. Looking forward to #5 and seeing what kind of response you get to all the stuff in this one!

Editor's Note: Sorry about the cover, I didn't realize it until it was already printed.

Jack is the start, 'Jack' is semi feeling intoxicated, "Jack" is fully intoxicated and you could care less what people said. Thanks for the illos and cover.

We have approximately 60 dues paid members, but some meetings are well over 70-75 people. I'm having Rich edit this clubzine more closely. He is also doing most of the paste up for it. It will improve with age. Many thanks for the cover and fillos, we sure can use them and would appreciate more.

Harry J.N. Andruschak
P.O. Nox 606
La Canada-Flintridge
California 91011

I have received issue #3 of your clubzine FOOTA,AV. For this zine, much thanks, I enjoyed reading it in bed. I am now out of bed doing a loc, but will have to get back to bed soon. I had a bike accident last saturday, when I hit a beer bottle thrown in the road. I went down, smashed my glasses, broke a tooth, collected a fine series of cuts, scrapes, and bruises.

The tooth hurts, but my medical insurance will pay 80% of the cost to put it right. It won't pay for the glasses, damn it all. Since I have astigmatism as well as myopia, I need special ground lens.

Still, no bones broken, and my blood sugar is stable at 140 or so, no need to worry about my diabetes getting out of control. But it is annoying.

In the tick sheet on the back page you have marked off "We want you to contribute". Well, fine and all that but what? Due to money problems I cannot afford to buy many SF books, so that's it for book reviews. Movies cost money, so that is out.

I suppose I could do something about science and/or space. Any special items you might be interested in? How about a juicey pro-atomic power article. Or an even juicier anti-atomic power article?

Not much going on at JPL. We are still in the holdrums. Nothing much is scheduled to happen for the next couple of years. Well, we are putting the GALILEO spacecraft together, but it is hard to write an article on the subject.

24 January, 1986, is the next real planetary encounter, when VOYAGER TWO finally gets out to Uranus. Then in May 1986 we launch Galileo, to arrive at Jupiter on 25 August 1988. Finally, VOYAGER TWO goes by Neptune on 24 August 1989. AS you can see, that is quite a ways down the line.

And we may have nothing else. The preliminary NASA budget for 1984 had a new planetary start in the Venue Mapping Mission. However, cost over-runs on the space telescope may force NASA to use the money to cover the telescope, leaving JPL with no start.

Editor's Note: Yes, how about a juicey pro-atomic power article.

David Palter
1811 Tamarind Ave., Apt. 22
Hollywood, CA 90028

Much as I hate to burden you with bad news (as I assume most of you will regard this) I must inform you that I am officially leaving fandom - or as you might fannishly put it, gafiating. I am not going to send in any more letters of comment on any fanzines, without exception, and that includes the issue that you just sent me - this explanation is in lieu of my usual commentary. Actually I am sure that the issue you sent me does deserve my careful attention and comment of the sort that I have given in the past. However, as it usual for this world, injustice strikes again and you will not receive the comments that you deserve (or at least, not from me.)

I have been active in fandom for approximately the past five years, and as you might expect it has been a mixed experience, having both good and bad aspects. Quite often it has really been a lot of fun and I am still grateful to the many of you who have helped make fandom enjoyable for me. Some others, whose names I needn't mention, have made fandom at times less than enjoyable. While the logical response (and one which I have tried, for a time) would seem to be selectivity, in which desirable fannish connections are preserved and undesirable ones expunged, I have eventually had enough difficulties with fandom that I am persuaded to leave it. This applies to fanzines, which I will no longer reply to, and conventions which I will no longer attend, not that I ever attended very many to begin with (and yes, it does seem a singularly inappropriate time for such a withdrawal, what with a WorldCon coming up here in my very own geographical area in just 1 1/2 years from the day I am typing this - but such is life.) Personal correspondence is exempt from my gafiating in that any of you who wish to continue writing to me can still reasonably expect to get a reply - although I imagine that many of you will find that there is now less reason to write me than there was previously.

I have alluded to the misunderstandings and occasional nastiness that I have encountered in fandom, but these are only part of the reason for my departure. To some extent I have just gotten tired of the whole thing. I increasingly find that not only the fanzines I receive but even the replies that I write to them seem relatively pointless. My personal contacts (e.g., the people who I actually meet, rather than merely correspond with) have also had some severe disappointments for me recently. Rather than struggle on with it and try to make the most of things, I have decided at this time to give up the effort and devote myself to other things (which other things may, of course, prove to be equally futile, however, that remains to be seen.)

If I may paraphrase Woodie Guthrie: so long, it has for the most part been good to know you.

Editor's Note: Sorry to see you gafiate. If you do become interested again, drop me a line.

LOCS

ASFIC, INC. TREASURER'S REPORT

Balance Brought Forward \$ 454.55
Debits 19.61
Dues 82.00
New Balance \$ 516.94

Respectfully Submitted,
Phyllis Boros, Treasurer

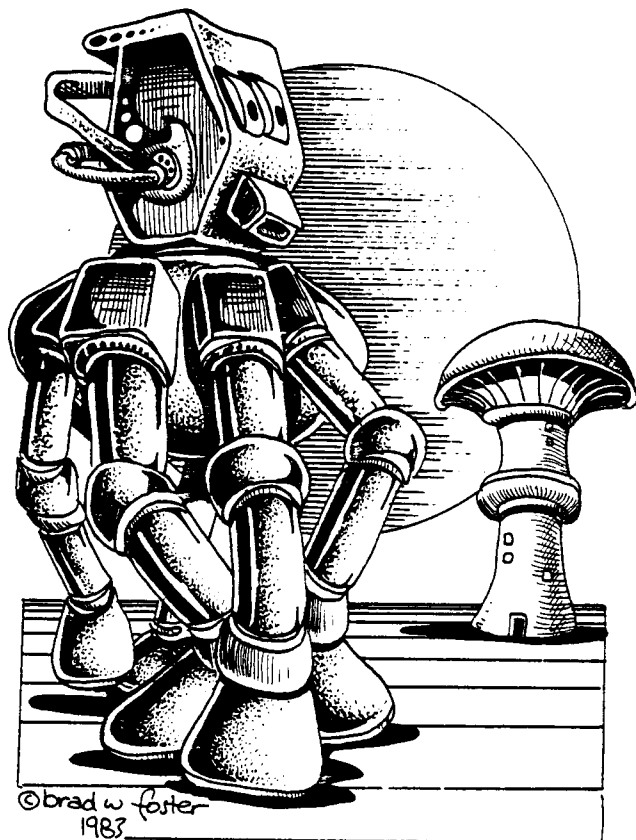
MEETINGS

The May Meeting of the Atlanta Science Fiction Club will be held May 21, 1983, at 8:00 p.m., in the Decatur Federal Bank Community Room, Dunwoody Branch, located in the Dunwoody Village at the corner of Mt. Vernon and Chamblee- Dunwoody Roads.

The June Meeting of the Atlanta Science Fiction Club will be held June 18, 1983, at 8:00 p.m., at the Northlake Hilton Inn, I-285 at the LaVista Road exit. (See reader board in the main lobby for room location)

PROGRAMMING FOR MAY

Programming for the May Meeting will consist of a panel on Robert Anton Wilson.



Jeannie Corbin will have five (5) copies of her RED SONJA (31 pages) for sale at \$10.00 each at the May Meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Congratulations are in order to Captain John C. Whatley, VI. He recently received these awards from FORCECOM Headquarters, Fort McPherson:

- 1st Place Magazine, 1982 Excellence
- 1st Army Journalism Award
- 4th Estate Award, Layout and Design

John is one of our club representatives in the Georgia National Guard.



MAY MEETING:

Saturday, May 21 , 1983 at
8:00 P.M. at DECATUR FEDERAL
BANK, MT. VERNON HIGHWAY,
DUNWOODY, GEORGIA

ART CREDITS FOR THIS ISSUE:

Brad Foster - Cover, P. 5, P.17
Rich Howell - P.13, P.17
Kathy Kaufmann - P.8, P.12
Cindy T. Riley - P.2,3,6,10,11,14

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